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McKeough.- The Victorious 77th Division.

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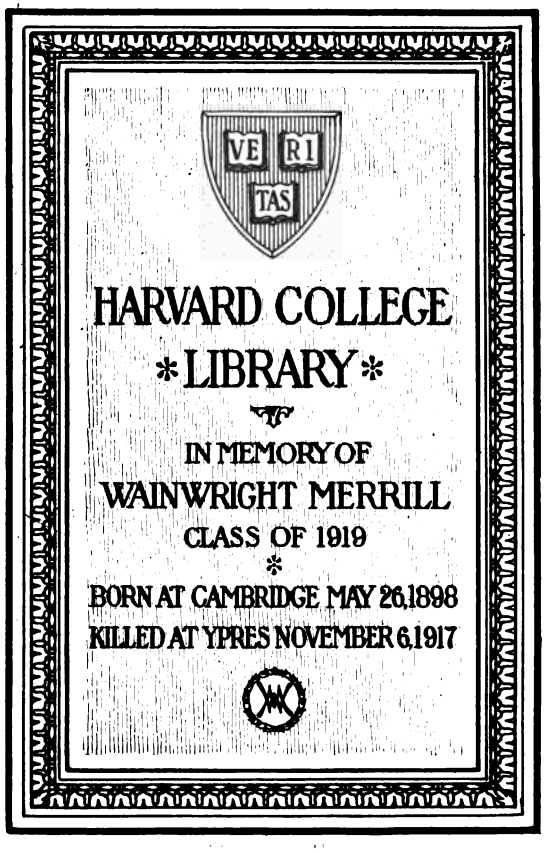
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CLASS OF 1919
*
BORN AT CAMBRIDGE MAY 26,1898
KILLED AT YPRES NOVEMBER 6,1917

Cover

The VICTORIOUS 77TH

HEROES OF THE ARGONNE FOREST

HISTORY OF THE 77TH DIVISION AT A GLANCE

Organized—September to November, 1917, Camp Upton, N. Y.
Demobilized—May, 1919, Camp Upton, N. Y.

Division Commanders

MAJ. GEN. J. FRANKLIN BELL
BRIG. GEN. E. M. JOHNSON
MAJ. GEN. GEORGE B. DUNCAN
MAJ. GEN. ROBERT ALEXANDER

MAJOR CASUALTIES BY UNITS

	Killed in action	*Died of wounds*	*Missing*	*Prisoners*	*Total*
305th Infantry	262	150	119	0	531
306th Infantry	203	91	173	155	622
307th Infantry	320	132	85	71	608
308th Infantry	343	105	125	109	682
304th Machine Gun Battalion	2	3	0	0	5
305th Machine Gun Battalion	22	9	5	0	36
306th Machine Gun Battalion	42	9	1	1	53
304th Field Artillery	25	10	2	0	37
305th Field Artillery	15	9	6	0	30
306th Field Artillery	16	10	2	0	28
302nd Engineers	25	24	11	0	60
Total	1275	552	529	336	2692

TOTAL OF ALL CASUALTIES—9611

Nature	*Officers*	*Men*
Killed in Action	69	1299
Died of Wounds	10	188
Severely Wounded	69	1894
Wounded Slightly	82	2889
Gassed	71	2297
Missing in Action	13	696
Prisoners (at latest report)	3	31
Total	317	9294

MATERIAL CAPTURED

	Vesle	*Argonne*	*Meuse*	*Total*
Heavy Artillery	0	5	13	18
Light Artillery	0	3	11	14
Trench Mortars	4	35	11	50
Machine Guns	25	155	97	277
Rifles	1000	3400	3200	7600

Engineer and Railway Material worth $2,000,000.

PRISONERS CAPTURED

Front	*Officers*	*Men*	*Total*
Baccarat	0	3	3
Vesle	0	27	27
Argonne Forest	12	619	631
Forest to Meuse	1	88	89
Total	13	737	750

DISTANCE GAINED

Sector	*Kilometers*	*Miles*
Baccarat	0	0.0
Vesle	12	7.5
Argonne Forest	22	13.7
Forest to Meuse	37½	23.5
Total	71½	44.7

DIVISION'S ACTIVITIES DAY BY DAY

	U. S.	*France*	*Total*
Days in Training	156	44	200
Days in Travel			76
(Based on one regimental unit)			
At Sea		14	
On Trains		5	
On Motor Trucks		1½	
Hiking: Behind the Lines		22½	
Into Enemy Territory		33	
Days in Reserve			13
Days in Rest Area			None
Days in Front Line			122
Baccarat (June 17 to Aug. 2)			56
Vesle River (Aug. 12 to Sept. 3)			23
Oise-Aisne (Sept. 4 to Sept. 15)			12
Meuse-Argonne:			
Argonne Forest (Sept. 25 to Oct. 9)			14
Forest to Meuse (Oct. 10-15; Oct. 31-Nov. 11)			17

TOTAL DAYS IN SERVICE

Calculated from Sept. 10, 1917, when first Selective Service Men arrived at Upton, to May 6, 1919, New York's parade to the returning victors 572

AWARDS

(to May 6, 1919)

Medal of Honor	5
Distinguished Service Cross	159
Croix de Guerre	61
Total	225

THE VICTORIOUS

77th

DIVISION

(NEW YORK'S OWN)

IN THE ARGONNE FIGHT

By 1st Lieut Arthur McKeogh

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"You people in New York have every reason to be proud of the Seventy-Seventh Division. I had the great honor to command it on the Vesle, at the Aisne, and in the Argonne Woods, and up on the heights opposite Sedan, where we were ready for action when the armistice was signed. I never met men more loyal, faithful, or a better body of troops, officers and men included."

Photo Brown Bros.

O V E R T H E T O P

THE 77TH DIVISION

(New York's Own)

By

1st LIEUT. ARTHUR McKEOGH
Of the 77th Division

" . . . While our left embraced the Argonne Forest, whose ravines, hills and elaborate defense, screened by dense thickets, had been generally considered impregnable."

Reporting after the armistice to the Secretary of War, in these words General Pershing characterized a veritable jungle—the strongest of all German defenses on the whole front, from the North Sea to Switzerland.

The fighting men who could pierce that vast fortress of nature, made doubly impenetrable by the diabolic ingenuity of the Boche, were to immortalize themselves in American history.

The fighting men who could and did conquer the famous Forest were New York's citizen-soldiers, the 77th Division.

When Byng, the Britisher, "pushed" for *5* miles at Cambrai all the world was agasp. The 77th Division started from a five-mile front and drove back the Germans day after day for two weeks. And when the Forest had been cleared, when its last concealed machine gun nest had been silenced, the 77th had gained *14* miles!

Fourteen miles of heart-breaking plunging through thickets that spat death with the rapidity of the serpent's fang! The historian of *The Stars and Stripes*, the official overseas publication, speaks of the clearing of the Argonne Forest as 'unique in the annals of the American Expeditionary Forces."

It was a conquest, as it had to be, not without its price. In the three weeks between September 26, the start of the offensive, and October 16, when Grand Pre

and St. Juvin, important towns on the northern fringe of the wood, had been taken —in those three weeks the 77th lost in killed, wounded and missing *3,697* of its best.

The New Yorkers paid the score unflinchingly. Paid it—and "carried on." For after a two-week's breathing spell, still under shellfire, for re-equipment and refilling the ranks, the 77th took up where it had left off and advanced *23* additional miles!

Thus, with the armistice, they achieved the gates of Sedan, after reclaiming a total of more than *37* miles for France.

And their conquest freed 10,000 French civilians who had lived for four years in Teuton bondage.

NO OTHER DIVISION WON SO MUCH

No other division in the whole Meuse—Argonne Offensive—and there were twenty-one of them in this operation—won as much ground as the 77th. No other division was in the front line both at the start and finish. No other division, whoever the claimant, fought its way completely through the "impregnable" Argonne Forest.

How shall the wonder of it be depicted? Who could have believed possible such a transformation in the youthful civilians, inducted into the service at Camp Upton, that they were able to beat the veteran German hosts out of a wooded stronghold which had balked the trained French for more than four years, on ground which had cost them 60,000 men? And to add to the glory of its achievement, the 77th faced five different enemy divisions at various times.

Flash on your mind this picture, faithfully drawn from life; it may serve to visualize what the fighting in the Argonne Forest really was.

It is September 29, 1918—memorable because it marked the beginning of the end for Germany's arrogant hope of world-dominion. The place is a small area of the Argonne wilderness, typical of all the terrain for miles around. Huge trees tower protectingly above their brood of close-grown saplings, branches interlacing branches overhead until no patch of sky is visible and the light is the sickly half-light of early dawn.

The ground hides under a maze of trailing vines, prickly bushes, rheumatic tree branches, imbedded in soggy leaves, with here and there a clump of rank fern. The undergrowth is so tangled as to give the impression that nature had gone on a debauch and later, viewing the havoc, in a moment of self-spite had added to her riotous handiwork. No birds sing. No living thing moves. Like the sear leaves, like the rotting tree trunks, it is a place of death.

While there is no sound here to relieve the sepulchral silence, a few hundred yards to right and left a regular, metallic, stuttering noise punctuates the quiet.

Machine guns!

If you are listening sharply, close at hand now there is a crackling of twigs and a sound as of branches forced aside. Some minutes elapse before movement is apparent, for one cannot see beyond twenty yards through the screen.

Gradually forms emerge into view, sketchy through the trees, in outlines of khaki—six or eight of them. This is the head of a company, forced by the thick growth to thread its way in single file—a whole company, say, of ninety men; for they have been advancing four days since crossing No Man's Land from the French trenches on September 26, and while they may have started with 150, they are 90 now.

And such is the wilderness that the entire company presents but the front of a single man!

No group of men, however small, could advance here in the "wave formation" of open country—that is, on a lateral line, one or two hundred yards wide, with intervals of five or eight yards between the attackers. Before such a line could proceed fifty yards over this kind of ground, it would be hopelessly broken, scattered and lost.

OFFICER HAS HIS WORK CUT OUT

The officer is the trail-breaker, kicking his way through the vines, pushing back branches with both elbows, detouring clumps that defy penetration. At times he twists sidewise to pass between saplings, or bends to the waist under an arch of intertwined branches. And always, he is watching his compass, keeping the jiggering needle as nearly fixed as possible on the letter "N", which means he is leading north,—deeper and deeper into the fastnesses of the Boche.

The men mainly are silent, breathing hard from the weight of equipment as they yank it through the brush that reaches out like the tentacles of an octopus to clutch at them. They must keep close behind one another, or even the single line will snap some place along its length and the remainder will find themselves casting about in the indistinguishable sameness of the forest for their comrades.

Occasionally an oath is half-shouted, half-repressed as a doughboy is thrown to his face by a treacherous root. Again, from the rear, may come a petulant cry, in some foreign accent, to:

"Slow it down, will yuh! Are we goin' to a war—or a fire?"

The officer turns to the sergeant behind him and says in an undertone:

"Pass back the word to that man to shut up."

The officer knows that his men are being strained. During three days, food has been meagre, sleep fitful and unsatisfactory, without blankets. His company has beaten its way into the Forest to the depth of a mile and a half. There are no roads

Photo Brown Bros.

77th Division Passing Through a French Village

Photo Brown Bros.

A One Pound Gun in Action

over which ration limbers can follow. The artillery cannot be called upon for support. Ammunition and food must be brought up by hand. The wounded must be carried back that mile and a half over the same difficult ground, the same slippery mud trails by which they had come forward.

Hard though it be on his men, he must hurry, that officer. The more because progress is slow must he hurry. Across his map there is a blue-pencilled line indicating a position to be reached by dusk—his "objective." Other units are depending upon him to be there to give them flank support. The whole division is planning to attain that advanced front, whatever the obstacles they meet meantime.

Suspecting every stirring leaf, every swaying limb after four days of bushwhacking, the officer is peering ahead—to left—to right, when—

"Rat - tat - tat - tat - tat - tat - tat - "

Three men in the line drop—two mortally hit. The bullets strike into their bodies with a strange little thump— just audible to the officer. Death comes at once.

ONLY A KID AFTER ALL

The third man collapses, holding both hands against his side and crying with an anguish terrible to hear. He is a big fellow, perhaps 28 years old; yet these are the unexpected words that he shouts, repeating them over and over, as his first scream sinks into a moan:

"Oh, mamma, mamma! It hurts, mamma! It hurts!"

It has not been necessary for the officer to shout: "Down! Take cover!"

Behind tree trunks his men throw themselves, behind clumps of roots, one man—as the officer notes with a momentary, irrepressible smile—behind a handful of ferns.

Someone crawls over to the wounded man and applies a dressing hurriedly, preparatory to pulling him out of the range of fire. Even if he could walk, the sufferer may not stand erect as yet. Men have been hit a second time and in cases killed while hobbling back to the first aid station.

The officer may give no attention to the dead or wounded just now. He has the living to think of. This is the business of war, at which he must be efficient in order that as few of his followers as possible may suffer.

With the opening shots of the long "burst" from the machine guns the officer's mind has leaped to a keenness comparable to the hunt dog's scent. Where is it? His mental torture is indescribable as his eyes strain vainly through the shrub for some telltale sign. Damn smokeless powder!

From the sound he knows the nest is somewhere within a 45 degree arc to the right front. Because the staccatos of the explosions have run into one another, he knows there are two guns—possibly three. How far away are they? He can only conjecture. Maybe forty or fifty yards. Nothing in the world is more deceptive to his ears and their judgment of location than those explosions. That may be because he is so eager to fix their source accurately. And he is aware that the nest will be well camouflaged by masters in the art of concealment.

GERMAN MACHINE GUN TACTICS

After an expenditure of seventy-five or a hundred rounds the Germans hold their fire. That is part of their machine gun tactics. The longer they fire the better their opponents may judge their position. So, confident that they are as yet undiscovered, they will wait for a target—a stir.

Everything is silent, motionless.

The officer counters with anti-machine gun strategy.

"Sergeant Quinn," he calls softly to one of the prone figures, "get your gang ready! Corporal Smith, your gang. You're in command, Sergeant, till I get back."

The Sergeant is put in charge because there are no other officers. The attack was begun with one Lieutenant to a company.

With his automatic unholstered, the officer, accompanied by an orderly starts crawling toward the origin of the sound. He is going personally to reconnoitre the position of the nest before he leads his men upon it.

With his own movement and that of his men, who are converging near the spot he has just left, the guns open again, as he has anticipated. He has hoped for another outbreak—to guide him. It is not pleasant to have those bullets chirping like the quick sweet notes of the meadow lark (for it is thus they sound) just above his helmet, but he must locate that position if his men are to attack it intelligently. Sometimes an unnatural depression of leaves or high grass from the force of the explosions in front of the muzzle, as if an electric fan were blowing them flat, will denote the hiding place. Sometimes a thin, bluish haze, hardly perceptible, is expelled from the muzzle.

Worming his way towards the sound, his helmet pulled well down on his forehead, the officer studies each bush, each irregularity of the ground, as they open up to his view through the turmoil of undergrowth. The very air is nervous with the reverberations of the guns. Tiny fern leaves, clipped off by bullets, flutter slowly, almost placidly, to the ground. The officer notices little white "bites" suddenly appearing low on the bark of trees.

Then he spots it! That big bush ahead, a little to the right,—that's it! His attention has been oddly attracted to it. Leaves do not turn their paler, under-side to the light. Here there are many such, indicating that fresh-cut boughs have been inserted at unnatural angles in the bush to make its cover denser. The watcher now sees through the leaves big rocks piled a little too regularly and a thick tree trunk lying flat. Just in front of the bush the forest is a little thinner, offering something approximating a field of fire. The forepart of the gun takes shape,—the slender muzzle and its "flash screen" projecting a few inches out of the fat, round

"jacket." The officer notes surrounding objects, so that he may not lose his find. Maybe he takes its position by compass. Then he crawls back to his men.

WHAT IS THE NATURE OF THE GANG?

When he told two of the non-coms to collect their gangs he wasn't indulging in slang. The gang is a development of modern warfare. Numbering from eight to twelve, these men are trained specialists who have simulated attacks upon machine gun positions in practice. The gang is an elastic collection of perhaps two scouts, an automatic rifleman, with two ammunition carriers, two or three bombers, a rifle grenadier and a couple of bayonet men. Each man has his job. The bombers are particularly effective because rifle-fire—a grazing fire—is not of much avail against the protections of a nest; it is more vulnerable to bombs dropped from above. But the trees are serious obstacles to bomb throwing, unless the missiles can be hurled high through a branchless aperture. The automatic riflemen, sometimes called a light machine gunner, can bore and bore like a steel drill on one spot, till eventually his "lead" breaks through.

The officer does not intend to rush the nest frontally. It would be too costly. He will leave his company under cover, and with the two gangs enfiltrate on both sides of the nest working around to its rear.

With minuteness he tells his non-coms where it is. "Sergeant, you take their left—Corporal, I'll go with you to their right. Let's go."

One by one, thus presenting no collective target, the men crawl out along the lines of a "V". As they draw nearer, the nest breaks into a frenzy of fire. A courageous German dashes out from the rear of the position so that he will be near enough to the attackers to throw effectively his "potato mashers" or hand grenades, so called because they resemble the old-fashioned, long, wooden-handled kitchen utensil.

"Get that bird!" some one shouts.

For the first time, American bullets are spent. The Boche drops with an agonized howl. There is something peculiarly soul curdling about the cries of a wounded Boche.

The automatic rifles get into action. The bombers add to the fire. The Germans throw out rifle grenades. There are snatches of shouts above the clatter of musketry. Another long-drawn howl comes from the nest—a "hit" through their logs and corrugated sheet iron.

A bomb drops at the edge of the nest. Another seems to have exploded right on top of it! Yes, it must have got home. Their fire is weaker. One of their guns is "out," probably.

They've stopped firing now. Is it a trick? No—they're *fini*—they're quitting! For through the trees at the rear two gray-green figures are darting.

"Get 'em!"

"There they go!"

The two Boches have a fair start, for they came out of a little covered trench at the rear, leading to the nest. The woods are alive with action as a dozen Yanks plunge after them. One turns, aims his pistol, fires and falls. The other, unarmed, makes to raise his hands in "Kamerad" attitude, but his action is too late.

In the nest are two dead forms, sprawled grotesquely. One fellow's mouth is open, as if he were snoring. His mustache is strangely well brushed. Of the

Photo Brown Bros.

On the Firing Line

two heavy maxim guns, one seems in good condition. The other shows bullet holes.

TIME FLIES IN SUCH A FIGHT

The officer looks at his watch. Nearly an hour has elapsed—an hour that seemed ten minutes. He takes stock. Four of his men have been killed; six wounded. Four Germans are dead; one badly wounded. And the company has been held up for an hour.

Through a German of his command, the lieutenant questions the wounded prisoner. The fellow is incoherent in moans. Where's the next nearest nest. He doesn't know—he swears it—he needs a doctor. He cannot bear the pain. * * * * To what regiment does he belong? (His epaulets bear the numerals 117.) * * * * The 117th—but the doctor—the doctor! * * * * Well, where is his regiment? Are they holding this trench ahead—here, on this map? * * * * No he thinks they moved * * * * Are they in these *laagers*—the huts shown in this ravine? * * * * Oh, please, please do not ask him to look at the map. No, no, they are not in the huts—they are retreating—last night they moved north—and what of the doctor—the first aid station? He knows he will die soon.

Reluctantly, the officer details two men to carry him back, because it means making stretcher-bearers of combatants.

"Come on—let that junk alone!"—to a group of doughboys rifling the dead men's packs for food. "Grab it, and get back to your squads!—Sergeant, let's get going."

The wounded have been dressed and are being carried, or helped back. The dead must lie for the present. When more troops come up from the rear those poor bodies which harbored such valiant souls will be identified and buried. Just now the outfit has to advance. And so they start forward—probably to repeat the whole performance a few hundred yards farther on.

The foregoing is a conservative rather than an overdrawn description of an

attack upon one of the numerous points of resistance with which the Argonne forest was pitted.

For fourteen days consecutively the men of "New York's Own" pushed ahead each morning, over strange treacherous ground, against concrete-lined trench systems, against nests, "pill boxes" and "strong" points, against wire belts so wide that the 302d Engineers had to bridge them almost as if they were rivers.

Veterans of many hard campaigns in other wars might have been daunted. The "Liberty Boys" (every one knows that their divisional insignia is the Statue of Liberty)—went forward almost blithely. "Nerve" aplenty they had. Of "nerves," however, they were completely devoid, according to the admission of a German officer whose men tried to hold them back.

PRAISE FROM SIR HUBERT

This officer, oddly enough, asserted that he himself wrote the famous "surrender-in-the-name-of-humanity" note to Lieut. Col. Charles W. Whittlesey and his beleaguered band. His name is Lieut. Heinrich Prinz, of the 76th German Division, and it was on the occasion of his meeting Colonel C. O. Sherrill, formerly Chief of Staff of the 77th in Coblenz, that he paid this tribute to the New York doughboys.

"Permit me to compliment you, sir, upon the morale of your men. I wish I might pay my respects personally to their commander. The American soldier seemed absolutely devoid of nerves. His buoyancy had a most depressing effect upon our men."

Here is an officer of the old militaristic school, a judge of fighting men, lauding—whom? Lauding the milkman, who used to serve you while you slept; the subway guard, whose knowledge of explosives was confined once to the language of overcrowded passengers; the taxi-driver whom you excoriated for keeping you waiting. Perhaps that young officer who attacked the nest was the budding lawyer to whom you gave that "worthless account" for collection—the one that was collected. That sergeant, who was a gang leader in the forest, may have been a sallow-cheeked draughtsman; the corporal, an enterprising proprietor of an east-side fruit stand.

Such were the men who came to Camp Upton, Long Island, in September, 1917. Ten thousand acres of virgin timberland were suddenly turned into what looked like a "boom town." Indeed, there may have been something remotely prophetic of their later conquest of the Argonne in their earlier conquest of Yaphank.

Weeks were spent in digging up stumps before drill grounds were available for the embryonic soldiers who were drafted—there is no sinister aspect to that word today!—under the Selective Service Law of June 15, 1917.

After a four months' training programme, under the command of the late Major-General J. Franklin Bell, the first units began sailing late in March, 1918.

Because of physical failing due to age, General Bell had to relinquish command of the division, which was transferred to Brig.-Gen. Evan M. Johnson, of the 154th Brigade.

MAKE-UP OF THE 77TH DIVISION

Regiments and brigades and their relationship being far from self-explanatory to the non-military reader, it may be well to list here for future reference the units that comprised the 77th:

77th Division Headquarters and Headquarters Troop

153rd Infantry Brigade

Consisting of

305th Infantry Regiment
306th Infantry Regiment

154th Infantry Brigade

Consisting of

307th Infantry Regiment
308th Infantry Regiment

152nd Field Artillery Brigade

Consisting of

304th Field Artillery Regiment
305th Field Artillery Regiment
306th Field Artillery Regiment
304th Machine Gun Battalion
305th Machine Gun Battalion
306th Machine Gun Battalion
302nd Engineer Regiment
302nd Field Signal Battalion
302nd Trench Mortar Battery
302nd Ammunition Train
302nd Ambulance Company
302nd Military Police

Keeping in mind that four companies, each having 250 men, constitute a battalion; that three battalions, in addition to a headquarters and a supply company, make a regiment, and that two regiments form a brigade, the civilian will have no difficulty in accounting for the 27,000 men that are needed to fill up a division. Yet, despite all this array of numerical force in a combat division, the War Department classified less than 50 per cent. of the 27,000, or exactly 12,250 men, as "rifles," i. e., actual front line fighting men. This indicates how large a force is needed behind the firing line to maintain supplies and support for the man with the rifle.

THE DIVISION STARTS FOR "OVER THERE"

Nearly the whole month of April, 1918, was required to transport the 77th from Upton to Calais, France. The infantry traveled by way of Halifax, Liverpool, Dover and thence over the channel; the artillery sailed direct from New York to Brest, entraining there for Bordeaux, where they spent a month mastering the French "75's," a light three-inch field piece, and the "155's," known as the "heavies." The "75's" threw a projectile weighing about 20 pounds; the shell of the "155's" weighed 96 pounds.

Photo Brown Bros.

A Trench Mortar Battery Ready to Fire

May was given over to training in Flanders with the British behind Ypres and Mount Kemmel. American ordnance was changed for British. American doughboys attended British schools; all indications pointed to permanent service for the 77th on the British front.

The 154th Infantry Brigade was even assigned to duty as reserves for the British behind Arras, having been shifted from the training area near St. Omer, southwest to the Somme country, where a German drive was then anticipated.

After about six weeks of training with the British, plans were changed back at G. H. Q. (General Headquarters)—where moving a red-topped pin a few inches on a map means moving tens of thousands of men. In this case the movement by train and on foot was to consume eleven days, in which time the 77th, not sure whether they were sight-seers or scrappers, but, knowing that they were confirmed souvenir-seekers, traveled virtually the whole length of the front to Lorraine.

From now on the 77th was to create and live history. Already it had the distinction of being the first National Army Division in France.

On the night of June 17, 1918, the New Yorkers moved into the front line in the Baccarat sector, relieving the 42d, or Rainbow Division. It was the first time an organization composed of citizen-soldiers took over and held a sector of front line trenches—the first time the victorious German was faced by the Selective Service man, on whom the eyes of the Allies, indeed, of the world, were focussed. The war was to be won by a preponderance of man-power. And it was the National Army alone that could supply the requisite numbers for victory.

The division front extended from Badonviller, on the south, to Herbeviller on the north, the whole slightly east of Luneville.

The relief of the 42d was successfully effected without a casualty, the 61st French Division remaining in part of the line to lend their aid should the enemy "start anything" at this rather critical period of troop change.

RELIEF IS NO SIMPLE UNDERTAKING

The procedure of a relief is considerably more complex than the word itself denotes. It is more than the mere replacing of one body of troops by another.

Officers of the 77th preceded their men into the trenches by twenty-four hours to familiarize themselves with the territory, the dugouts, the peculiarities of the trench system, and to learn from the outgoing officers of the 42d the local customs of the enemy as to patrols, snipers, etc. Each company had allotted to it a certain subsector, which in turn was split up into platoon fronts. In order that the various platoons might be led without confusion to their respective positions, non-commissioned officers went forward with the officers to guide the units into their strange environs.

Liaison, or the various methods of communication, by phone, runners, etc., between flanks and rear, had to be prearranged; trench stores, including bombs, small arms ammunition, rifle grenades, fireworks, had to be turned over from the outgoing to the incoming units, and receipts for the same given and taken in much the manner of a commercial transaction.

And all this was done under cover of night, without even the flare of a match or the flash of a torch to facilitate operations.

It must appear that on an active front the time of relief was an ideal moment for attack, or, at least, heavy artillery activity.

The Baccarat sector had been quiet almost since the outbreak of the war, and both French and Germans used it as a sort of rest area for troops worn out by strenuous service elsewhere.

With the advent of the National Army in the line, the enemy's curiosity could not bide the completion of the relief, which took about ten days. Before all the New Yorkers had "gone in" the enemy sent over a crack raiding battalion of the picked "Hindenburg circus" detachment.

The "Hindenburg circus" was composed of selected fighters who were shifted from sector to sector for the sole purpose of raiding. Nearly every man of them wore the Iron Cross, and because of their efficiency at killing and taking prisoners for the purpose of identifying units opposing the Germans, they were accorded special privileges and pay, at no time being called to the drudgery of merely holding the line. They were the gentlemen road agents of Kultur, as it were.

The Germans attached considerable importance, it would seem, to the examination and appraisement of the fighting qualities of the 77th when they sent their elite raiders down to the tranquil Baccarat front. That they knew the National Army had safely evaded their vaunted submarine barrier, and were actually leaning over the front counter of trench warfare, ready for business, is indubitable. For toward the end of the relief one of their squat observation balloons floated a pennant on which were painted the words:

Goodby 42nd—Welcome 77th

The Germans had spies in Lorraine. Little wonder at that, since during so many years they had dominated Alsace-Lorraine, whose border was just opposite the 77th's front. Civilians lived within range of the long distance artillery and even came with passes into the front line villages to pluck vegetables from their truck gardens. The raid of June 24th therefore was not without the collusion of informants inside the 77th's lines.

Three hours after the attack, almost before the wounded had been gathered into the first aid posts, the people of New York glanced across their breakfast coffee to this bulletin on the first page of their newspapers (this occurred in the hopeful days when the German wireless was as prompt and communicative as a press agent):

> BERLIN (via London) June 24—German troops, in an attack on trenches in the Badonviller region (southeast of Luneville), occupied by French and Americans, inflicted heavy losses and brought back prisoners, according to the official communication from headquarters today. The bulletin reads:
>
> East of Badonviller shock troops penetrated the Franco-American trenches and inflicted heavy losses. They brought back forty prisoners.

The raid, which occurred at 3:30 A. M., was preceded by an artillery preparation unequalled by anything the French had ever known on that front.

Box barrages were put down at two points—Neuviller, where the 307th was holding, and Badonviller, the 308th's front. A box barrage is a three-sided curtain of artillery fire, each side to a depth of about 150 yards, and so dense as almost to defy penetration. It aims at preventing reinforcements from the rear joining the hemmed-in troops. The fourth side is the front line itself, which is being attacked. Before the raiders enter the trench objective, they have timed their approach so that a preliminary barrage, hammering upon the section of trench they are to pene-

trate, may have lifted. The whole operation is like an elaborate man-trap in which the defenders, outnumbered and unaided, are beaten before it snaps its jaws upon them.

FIRST ACTUAL TOUCH WITH THE BOCHE

Some importance should be attached to this raid because it was the first hand-to-hand clash of the National Army man and the Boche. With an enemy battalion opposing it and a French platoon on its right wiped out, a single platoon of Yanks at Badonviller showed the German Intelligence Office that Americans knew how to take bitter medicine—and in the taking administer a little themselves. The German communique omitted mention of their own losses. And they were not light.

The raided platoon, of Company C, 308th, was commanded by Lieut. John V. Flood, a former New York lawyer and a graduate of the first Plattsburg training camp. Only six men of the platoon of forty-eight came through unhurt.

Out of admiration for the stubborn, yet hopeless fight these men put up, the French awarded the Croix de Guerre to the whole platoon. Their commander was honored in addition with the D. S. C.

Here follows his description of the raid, in the simple, concise language of the soldier:

"My recollection of the C. Gs. (Combat Groups) on that sector is that C. G. 9 was held by a French platoon of about 28 men. I held C. G. 10 with 48 men and C. G. 11 was garrisoned by about 15 Frenchmen. At 2.30 A. M. I ordered 'stand-to' and went up and down the line once to see that every man was in position. I finished with this inspection at about 2.55. I was sitting in my dugout, with my hands lying listlessly on the table in front of me, when exactly at 3 o'clock there was a terrific explosion, which shook the old dugout. My 'non-coms' immediately gave the gas alarm. It seemed to me that for about ten minutes the Boche sent over gas shells, when they changed to H. E. (high explosive) and shrapnel.

"Of course, all the men except the sentries took to the dugouts. I decided, however, that it was more dangerous in them than out of them, so I ordered all out to their positions, and made them lie flat in the bottom of the trenches, with the sentries standing watch.

THE COMMANDER'S TRIBUTE TO BRAVERY

"The barrage lasted about twenty minutes longer, when the shells suddenly stopped dropping on us and we could hear them going over our heads. It was at this point that the Hun appeared and the men started to greet him. One man, especially, Corporal Patrick Hendricks, who was given the D. S. C., and afterwards killed in action, did wonderful work with his automatic rifle and accounted for a good many of the Germans.

"I think we would have been all right if they had attacked us only on the front, but evidently the Frenchmen on my right were pretty well torn up. The Germans must have gotten in on them first and then continued against my right flank. Of course, I realized that we were done for, as I could see that they greatly outnumbered us. But we were there to hold the position to the last man. We did.

"Finally, they managed to get into the trenches with us, and then the thing had become a hand-to-hand fight—kicking, biting, stabbing, scratching, anything to get the other fellow first. I found myself in a turn in a trench with my sergeant,

Frank Wagner, and my runner, Private Dietrich, behind me. Six of the Boches started down the trench towards us, waving their 'potato mashers.'

"I shot the first two, but the third one, in the meantime, threw his grenade. As he did, I jumped around the turn and yelled to the others,' Look out!' The grenade hit the wall of the trench behind me and dropped between my feet. I looked down, saw it and jumped, drawing both legs up under me. At that moment it exploded and tore off the right foot about six inches below the knee, the leather of my shoe holding the foot on. On both legs it cut me up pretty well.

"Fragments of the same grenade hit Wagner in the neck and knee, and Dietrich in the arm and foot. The remaining four Germans rushed on us then, and as we lay stretched out, went through our clothes, taking everything we had. While they were at it a little Italian, Racco Rocco, came up the other end of the trench and started after the four of them with his bayonet. One of them threw a grenade, which exploded under him. He died a few days later.

"The fighting kept up a little while longer when the Huns evidently thought help was coming up to us, because they suddenly became greatly excited and started back with their booty and prisoners.

"As nearly as I can make out, we had 14 killed, 16 wounded, 4 of whom died, and 12 taken prisoners, one of whom died, and nearly all severely wounded. The men who fought exceedingly well were Sergeant Wagner, Maroney (both D. S. C. men) and Herold (died of wounds); Corporal McKee (died of wounds), Higgins, Hendricks, (D. S. C.) and Privates Dietrich, John Sullivan, Patrick Sullivan and Rocco."

FIRST REAL TASTE OF POISON GAS

Historical records in the office of the Chief of Staff at Washington state that during the raid there was "great activity on the part of enemy artillery, 3,000 shells, 210 mm. size, split between high explosives, shrapnel, mustard and phosgene gas, having been sent over between 3 and 7 A. M."

It was on that morning that the 77th had its first real taste of poison gas. False alarms, inevitable among green troops, had been sounded time and again previously, but this time there was no doubting that the cry of "Wolf!" was genuine. The New Yorkers evidenced the value of their gas discipline, for although phosgene and mustard gas was poured in upon five or six villages only 180 casualties resulted.

The Germans used three kinds of gas in major quantity—green, blue and yellow cross shells, taking their name from the color of the cross painted on their sides.

Green cross was an asphyxiant containing phosgene, and a single deep inhalation of it in high concentrations could cause death. One of the cooks of Company B, 308th, died from phosgene gassing, because the elastic bands on the facepiece of his mask became entangled over the mouthpiece, and he could not adjust it quickly enough. It was only a difference of a second or two—the difference between breath and death.

Blue cross, an arsenic compound, causing sneezing, headache and nausea, was used mainly for harrassing. It rarely produced more than temporary discomfort, although one of its advantages, from the enemy's point of view, lay in the fact that it could be mixed with shrapnel or high explosive in the same shell. Its quick detection was thus more difficult, for most gas shells, carrying only a small explosive charge, could be identified by the muffled sound of their burst, or by a peculiar, wabbling whistle, as they somersaulted through the air, due to the shifting of the liquid inside.

And a word about mustard gas or yellow cross, perhaps more generally familiar to and misunderstood by the civilian than any other. Mustard gas was Jerry's chef d'oeuvre. It had a threefold sting. If you defeated its lachrymatory and pulmonary "drives" by prompt adjustment and prolonged wear of the mask, it still had a reserve barrage to put down through your clothing upon your skin, especially moist parts.

Its action was more mechanical than chemical; it was corrosive, or blistering, like a flame. And its persistence was a matter to inspire picturesque vocabularies to matchless heights. Its vapors would cling in the atmosphere for periods ranging from twenty-four hours to seventy-two hours after a "shoot," whereas chlorine or phosgene would be dissipated in from one to four hours.

Not more than 5 or 6 per cent., however, of all mustard gas casualties became fatalities. Perhaps 15 or 20 per cent. were severe, confining victims to the hospitals for three weeks—or three months. Skin burns, against which the mask could not protect, of course, were rarely fatal unless half or more of the body had been affected.

Mustard's forte consisted in filling the hospitals rather than the cemeteries. It was tactically effective because it took combatants out of the line. One day sixty-seven Tommies made their inevitable tea with water, which was ever elusive in the line, taken from a mustard gas shell crater. Sixty-six were gassed. Before tea was served the sixty-seventh had been sent on a detail.

NOVICE FIGHTERS LEARN THE GAME

For the novice fighters of the 77th, the Lorraine front offered many practical lessons other than defensive measures against gas. Almost nightly, patrols were sent out into a spacious No Man's Land to examine the enemy's wire, to lie in ambush for his patrols, or to inspect his front line trench, which showed disrepair in numerous places and was manned only by small scattered groups.

With similar "petty posts," as they were called, each consisting of about a squad of men, the New Yorkers held their own firing trench. Not infrequently, while a patrol of Yanks, with automatics, trench-knives and bombs ready for action, might be groping noiselessly under the indifferent stars along a stretch of deserted enemy trench, a patrol of Boches would be paying return compliments in the Yankee trench. The fact of their visit would be apparent the following morning from an overturned bench, perhaps, in an unused observation post, or an unexploded "potato masher" that had slipped its moorings from a German's belt.

And of a score of such mutual visits the total of casualties on both sides would be—nil. Oh, it was *beaucoup bon*, or to translate freely, pretty soft—was the "battle of Baccarat" by comparison with later experiences.

Graduated from trench warfare after a course lasting forty-five days—from June 17 to August 2—the 77th was thereafter to engage, exclusively and continuously, in open warfare right up to the armistice.

ON THROUGH CHATEAU THIERRY TO THE VESLE

On the latter date, the 37th Division, of the Ohio National Guard, "took over" from the Liberty Division. After three days on the hike, the New Yorkers entrained for—they knew not where. With air bombers overhead at one time, dropping their "iron rations" inaccurately, nearly a day and a night were spent travelling toward Paris in foul-smelling French box-cars. In the vicinity of Coul-

ommiers, thirty-five miles east of the French capital, the division was transferred from trains to French motor trucks, in an endless string of which the New Yorkers headed north through Chateau Thierry for the Vesle.

The Chateau Thierry drive of mid-July had spent itself and fresh troops were sorely needed to take up "the torch from failing hands." At the cost of complete devastation to all the countryside, the Marne and Ourcq Rivers had been wrested from the Boche. He was now making a stand—a grim one—on the Vesle river.

Observation baloons were being shot down by enemy avions almost overhead as the men of the 77th ended, at Fere-en-Tardenois, an eight-hour ride through crumbled villages over shell-marred roads. Fierce fighting had left its black, malodorous imprint everywhere. In the Nesles Wood an officer of the 77th, standing under a tree, heard a drip—drip—drip—on the leaves near his feet. The weather, remarkably enough, had been dry. He looked aloft. Sprawled across a fork of the branches was what had been a Boche sniper.

On the night of August 11, 1918, the First and Third Battalions of the 305th Infantry relieved the depleted 4th American Division and the 62d French on a front of nearly four miles, extending from Mont Notre Dame to, but exclusive of, Fismes, along the Vesle. And for four days, be it recorded to the credit of the 305th, that regiment held unaided a position previously occupied by two divisions.

No conception of the fighting on the Vesle is adequate without an understanding of the difficult nature of the ground. Dignified with the name of a river, the Vesle was really a thirty-five foot sinuous stream, not much deeper than ten or twelve feet, but with sheer banks, in places five feet high. Through a flat-bottomed valley the stream's path kept company with a standard gauge railroad and the main Rheims-Soissons road.

The Germans occupied dominating ground on the northern ridge at the foot of which the 77th held an indefinite line along the river, north of it at two points, and at two other points south of it. Such was the vantage ground of the Boches that from their heights they actually depressed the muzzles of their light artillery to fire into the American positions. The village of Bazoches was in the hands of the enemy. St. Thibaut, south of the river, was Yankee territory. On the eastern brigade sector—the 154th's—Ville Savoye served as the front-line battalion's P. C. (post of command). In the rear, Chery Chartreuve, La Pres, La Tuillerie, and Chartreuve Farms, Ferme des Dames and Mareuil-en-Dole were various regimental and brigade headquarters, the division P. C. being the last-named place.

FUNKHOLES CHANGE HANDS

Over all these villages hostile artillery rained its high explosive, shrapnel and gas from the heights opposite. Air bombers "laid eggs" on the villages. Aviator-machine gunners flew along the lines of the 302d ammunition and ration limbers. The enemy artillery even used Austrian high-velocity field pieces for sniping. Most of the roads were under direct observation, and a single pedestrian or horseman would draw artillery fire.

In the hazy front line there were no trenches. No Man's Land—including, at first, the Devil's Castle and the Tannery—was bounded vaguely by the varying successes and failures of raids and counter-attacks. What was a Boche funkhole one night was a Yank's the following night.

Funkholes are the trenches of open warfare—irregular lines of disconnected nooks in the ground dug by the doughboy individually, or with his "buddy," and just big

enough, accordingly, to hold one or two of them. Everyone has read of "digging in." Funkholes are the result of it. And their name has its origin in a favorite British term—funk, or fear. Now, not to side with the polite war correspondents who prefer the word "foxhole," there's no denying that the average intelligent human being lacks some of the poise of the drawing room when the blithe machine gun bullet, the humming bit of shrapnel or the swift shell fragment is zipping close by. And it is at such times, ordinarily, that funkholes are dug.

In common, frankness, therefore, it is only right to call a spade—a funkhole; for under stress of heavy fire, a spade plus a few hectic minutes of digging equals a 2x3x3 foot funkhole.

A German spade is preferable, as its spoon is more commodious than the U. S. A. regulation pack shovel. And many New Yorkers tossed away their "sea shore" equipment for the abandoned Boche subway implement, going into the fight with the alien shovel in one hand and a rifle in the other.

The northern bank of the Vesle railroad cut is still pock-marked, probably, with scores of funkholes. It was along this track that many clashes occurred. When the enemy was forced back bodies of Germans and Americans were found stretched side by side in the only comradeship there could have been between them—that of death. One lad in khaki had fallen in such wise that his head was pillowed on his hands, with his forearms resting evenly along one of the rails, as if he were soul-wearied of it all and waited a more merciful end from some phantom locomotive.

The most violent death, indeed, must have been grateful compared with the awful torture of incineration in the flames of the liquid fire thrower. It was here that the 77th had its first encounter with that refined contrivance of the bellicose Teuton mind. A detachment from two companies of the 308th were assaulted with *flammenwerfers* on the night of August 22, 1918.

Imagine a stream of blood-red flame, about five feet in diameter, spurting with a roar for thirty yards from its nozzle; add to this the vicious chatter of machine guns, the crash of grenades, the gleam of bayonets in the glare, and you have an idea of the inferno in which the Yanks fought that night. Yet when the flame throwers had burned themselves out shortly—for the portable shoulder tanks do not hold much oil—men of the 308th counter-attacked and took some of the enemy prisoners. At such moments it requires man-sized restraint not to kill in cold blood.

What more fitting name could have been chosen for this valley where Satan himself had his abode in the Chateau du Diable, than "The Hell Hole of the Vesle"? Witness how life was burnt out there in that furnace of withering fire:

Only two officers out of twenty-six in the Third Battalion of the 305th were left for duty after that unit had been in the line for twenty-four hours.

In Ville Savoye the major of the Second Battalion, 308th, practically his entire staff and all of Company H, excepting two men, were severely gassed.

In the same village the first aid post was set on fire while crowded with wounded, but the blaze was extinguished before gaining much headway by a medical officer and a private of his detachment, both of whom tore off their gas masks to fight the flames—and left off the masks the better to treat the accumulating sufferers. In the end they were gassed, themselves, of course.

On the night of August 21, while preparations for a relief were under way, a single shell killed four officers and two non-coms, and wounded others, at the mouth of a natural cave that was being used as a dugout.

One day an officer was calling out final instructions to a runner about to set out

from a battalion P. C. when a "whizzbang" almost decapitated the runner, as they talked.

Another shell landed squarely in a funkhole in which someone recollected having seen an artillery liaison officer. Was the witness sure there had been but one officer there? What of his comrade from the artillery who had come to relieve him? The blackened ground was examined, jagged pieces of flesh were pushed aside and it was found that both officers had been together. Three hands were unearthed.

VESLE PROPERLY NAMED—"HELL HOLE"

Such was the Vesle—"the Hell Hole."

The instances cited could be thrice multiplied and still the story of individual suffering and collective valor would have been left untold. And operations were not confined to a small scale. A night raid, on August 27, was directed against Bazoches, which, with its chateau, was a formidable barrier to an advance. Company E, supported by Company G, of the 306th was to work its way into the town from three points accompanied by men of the 302nd Engineers, who were to mine and demolish the chateau machine-gun post.

Just as a whole platoon of Company B of the 308th had disappeared a few days before in an advance on the Tannery, so two platoons, in this assault dropped mysteriously out of existence upon entering Bazoches behind the artillery preparation.

The flame thrower had been brought into use again, and it may be that the ill-starred platoons perished thus. Charred bodies were found later. They could not be identified.

A third platoon made progress into the town and dug in along the railroad tracks, but after two hours was driven from its position by fire from three sides. Only four men and the platoon commander reported back to battalion headquarters. The fourth platoon accomplished its mission, passing through debris-cluttered streets and hurling hand grenades into the houses and cellars, but, lacking liaison with the other three platoons, finally withdrew.

The Boche, to sum it up, had been encountered in unexpected numbers. His machine gun posts were as numerous as riveters in a shipyard. By the noon of his flares (and the German flare was as much a thing of beauty as of execration) he brought the support company into sharp relief and showered the illuminated target with grenades.

The raid on Bazoches was a costly one.

THE "PRIVATES' GENERAL" TAKES COMMAND

It was at this point that the 77th acquired a commander who was to see it through the loftiest achievements of its career to the armistice—Major-General Robert Alexander. From the training days of Flanders, Major-General George B. Duncan had been in command.

General Alexander was a veteran of many campaigns, having won his way through all the ranks of the Regular Army, from that of private to colonel, before sailing for France in November, 1917. Four weeks later, then a brigadier-general, he commanded the 41st Division, from which he went to the 32nd, one of the 77th's neighbors on the Vesle. On August 28th, with the rank of major-general, he came to the 77th. His first official act was to dictate an order that put heart and enthusiasm into the sorely-tried New Yorkers. Having been an enlisted man, General

Alexander knew that a few words of commendation from high sources, that personal contact with the man in ranks, that consideration for his welfare would contribute toward building up that unified divisional soul which animates real fighters. And it was alongside of his men in the front line, encouraging them with words of cheer, that he won the D. S. C.

"Upon taking command of the 77th Division," he wrote, "the undersigned desires to express to the troops of that organization his satisfaction in general terms with the record made by the division in the face of an enemy at least equal in numbers to ourselves, and who has, in addition, the inestimable advantage of four years of war. The division has attacked with vigor and with the aggression requisite to carry its undertakings to a successful conclusion. It has undoubtedly caused more casualties in the ranks of the enemy than it has suffered, and finally it has so impressed its personality upon the enemy as to render him extremely cautious in his action in face of us. . . .

"It is impressed upon all that our actions so far have been most creditable and that we have more than held our own against the veteran troops of our foe. We are better men and we can become better soldiers than our enemies. . . .

"When the proper time comes, as determined by our chiefs, this division will advance, and will do its part as well as the American division on our right, or the division of our valiant allies on our left. We represent here our country and we are embarked in a sacred cause, to which each and every man of us has pledged his very best effort."

Today, in the chronological records of the Chief of Staff's Office in Washington, there appears under date of September 4, six days after General Alexander's heartening message, this entry:

"At 5.15 P.M. the 77th Division reports: Patrols along front cross Vesle and force enemy back. One combat patrol as far as La Croix la Motte, between Vauxcere and Blanzy. Three battalions across the Vesle."

Before the 77th Division could be stopped, 7½ miles were once more part of France, and the Boche had been driven across the Aisne with Chemin des Dames at at his back. And this after nearly a month of heartbreaking "holding"—"holding" and nothing more, save death—on the unforgettable Vesle.

NEW SPIRIT OF VICTORY IS BORN

Of the exultation of their advance, and of their losses at the Vesle, a new spirit had been born in the 77th—a spirit of high determination and cool courage that was later to inspire the New Yorkers to their victory in the Argonne.

In the next twelve days—between September 4th and 15th inclusive—against the strong rear guard actions of the Boches, the 77th occupied eleven French villages between the Vesle and the Aisne rivers. Fismes and Fismette had been included in the divisional front; the other shattered villages were Bazoches, Perles, Blanzy, Vauxcere, Merval, Serval, Longueval, Barbonval, and—almost on the Aisne, which paralleled the river—Villers-en-Prayeres.

New York's Own had begun "hurrying the Hun," as its share in the Oise-Aisne Offensive.

Thrilling to the thought that this ground over which it moved was its own by right of conquest, the 77th pushed forward under heavy artillery fire, sustaining losses that further taxed its diminished numbers. As an average, few companies

had more than two officers, whereas they had started with six, and of men, company ranks that had originally totalled 250 were now thinned out to 150 and even less.

The 307th and 308th Infantry on the right of the division sector were faced by the Germans on two sides, north and east, for the adjoining division had been less arduous in the advance, thus leaving the flank exposed. Glennes, La Petite Montagne and Revillon witnessed many local engagements of considerable severity. Once the French forced a way into Glennes, but were promptly driven out. After one assault in front of Revillon, a youthful lieutenant of the 308th, the last of the officers of his company, when ordered into another attack, sent back this message:

"Send me more men. Only 27 of company left."

In another combat near Revillon a captain who had once been a Princeton professor was shot down by machine gun fire after his lieutenant had been killed. One leg and one arm were useless. He ordered himself placed upon a stretcher and with the bearers carrying him up and down the field, directed the attack reclining, until the trench objective had been taken. Nor would he leave his men until ordered back to the dressing station by his superior. Such insuperable courage well merits the Congressional Medal of Honor. And gets it. His name is L. Wardlaw Miles. Five additional similar awards, the highest Washington can give, were accorded the 77th, a record that stands among the foremost of all divisions in the A. E. F.

A squad of men in Company B, 302nd Field Signal Battalion, were cited in orders for a remarkable feat in liaison work when they relaid a telephone line while under three barrages, from La Grotte, the 307th's advance P. C., to Blañzy, advance headquarters of the 154th Brigade. The original line had been cut by shell fire in sixteen places. Patched up twice it "went dead" twice. The new line, covering a distance of about three miles, was laid in an hour and three-quarters. Too often the splendid service of the signalman, or "trouble shooter," as he is called, is completely overlooked.

The 152nd Brigade of Field Artillery made the consolidation of new positions along the Aisne a hazardous job for the enemy. The bark of the "75's" was so persistent that one wondered when the poor gunners slept or ate. Frequently, however, the artillerymen would suffer enforced silence—when hostile aviators dropped low over their positions to peek through their camouflage.

The German fliers had been the bane of the 77th's career. While there was no lack of "archies"—or anti-craft guns—there seemed to be no friendly aviators to go out and repel the inquisitive boche. In the thickest of fire from the "archies" whose explosions dot the sky with innumerable Mercury wands outlined in smoke, the German airmen playfully dove, banked and tail-spinned to safety, as if they were saying to the gunners: "Did you ever see me do this one before?"

SIXTY-TWO AIRPLANE CALLS IN ONE DAY

Long since the doughboy had learned that the bugle call for "Attention," or a blast on a platoon leader's whistle meant: "*Enemy plane overhead—take cover—all movement ceases!*" And he had learned too, that having dug in, it was wise to spread boughs over the fresh earth, if his modest home was to escape aerial observation. The German aviators had a prompt method of telling their artillery just where a Yank position was. And a minute or two later Herr Whizz-Bang with the family would drop in on an unannounced call. A bugler who took pride in his lung power boasted that in a single day he had blown a total of 62 airplane calls.

After nearly two weeks between the Vesle and the Aisne and just as an elaborate

attack had been planned upon the enemy, orders came sending the 8th Italian Division into the line to relieve the New Yorkers.

The 77th had been in the front line for 92 days. It had been promised a well-earned rest. The Vesle-Aisne fighting had meant 2,200 casualties. And the men went out in the belief that the division was headed south for rest billets and leave or *perm*, as the poilu abbreviated his precious *permission*.

Its biggest task, however, still awaited the 77th. In the eyes of authorities at G. H. Q., Alexander's men had already fulfilled their leader's prophecy that being "better men" they could "become better soldiers than our enemies."

To the former citizens of New York, first class troops now, was to be given the post of honor in the famous Meuse-Argonne Offensive, the real determinant of the war.

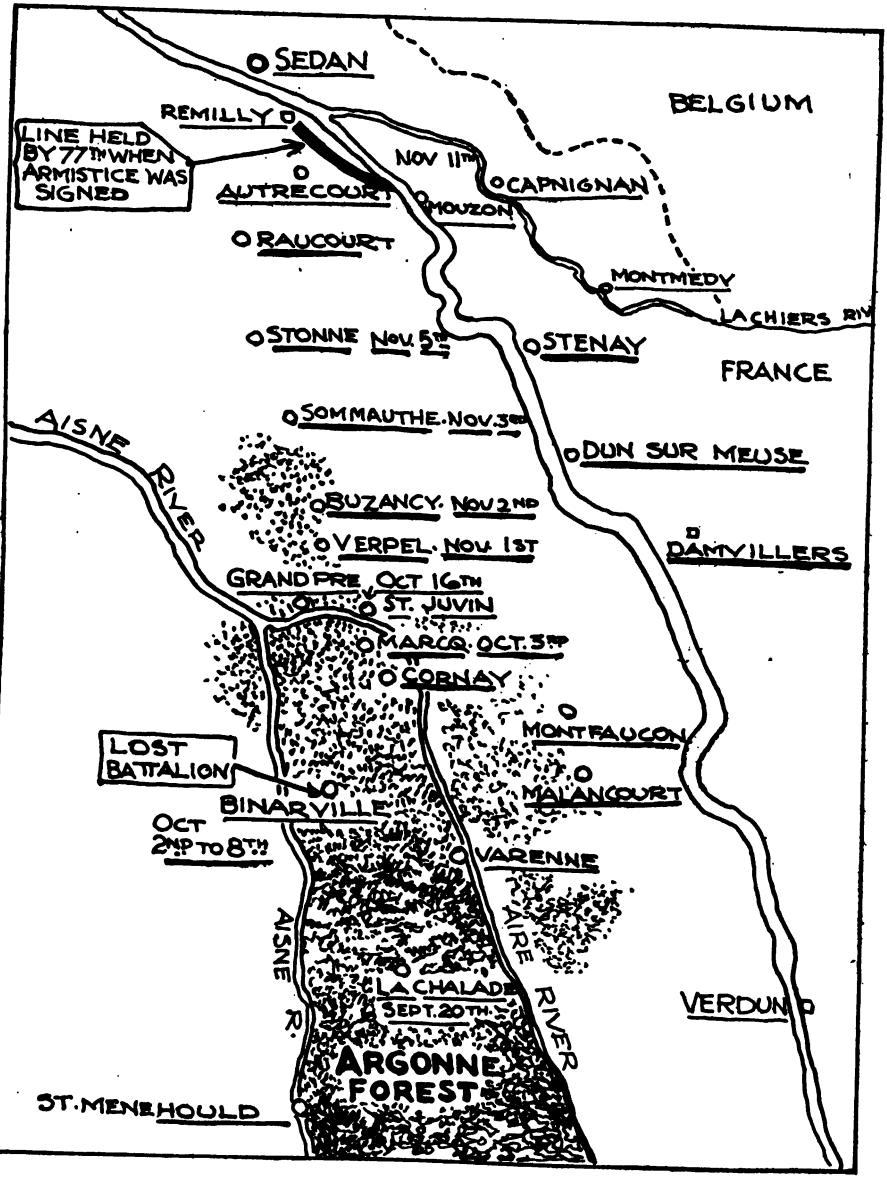
Six hundred and fifty-thousand strong, the Americans attacked on a 20-mile front in this great drive. The Argonne forest, covering a quarter of the total frontage, and constituting the western fortress of the renowned Kriemhilde Stellung Line was assigned to the 77th. Incidentally, the "Liberty Division" was scheduled to pass through the Hindenburg Line on the first day of the attack. Upon the reduction of the Argonne Forest depended largely the success of the whole mammoth operation, for the wilderness was the extreme western pivot on which the other divisions were to sweep north.

CREDIT TO WHOM CREDIT IS DUE

The assertion has been made that many divisions fought in the Argonne Forest. This is altogether incorrect, as is clearly shown by General Pershing's official map of the operation. The mistake arises from the fact that all the country thereabouts was called, loosely, "the Argonne," just as the territory adjacent to the Somme River is called "the Somme." Twenty-one divisions, as has been said, took part in the Meuse-Argonne Drive, which was named from its boundaries—the Meuse River on the east and the Argonne Forest on the west, as distinguished from "the Argonne." For two days the 28th Division of Pennsylvanians fought through the eastern edge of the forest to Apremont, which they captured. All credit is theirs for their swift advance. But for twelve days after that, against the most tremendous odds, the 77th pressed on, as it had from the outset, through the church-dark glades of the forest itself. On the left of the 77th was the Fourth French Army.

Leaving the Aisne on September 15, 1918, the New Yorkers had made forced night marches half way south to the Marne, where once more they crowded into French camions and raced southeast all night and half a day through Epernay, through Chalons, through Vitry and up into the Argonne Forest to billets south of Ste. Menehould. It seems incredible now that the exhausting trip, for men war-worn from service, can be reviewed in a single sentence.

During nearly a week the division moved up cautiously at night to the No Man's Land that fronted the Hindenburg Line. The concentration of troops and guns was accomplished with greatest secrecy. Being confined strictly to their barns, out of view of airplanes, the men slept by day and lunched at midnight, while French troops in the reserve positions drew out singing their rollicking "Madelon." These "crazy Americans" were going to attack the Argonne Forest! *"Eh, bien!"* If it was the martial vogue among Americans to commit heroic, wholesale suicide by hurling themselves frontally against a naturally defended position that had been immovable for nearly four years, fortified lavishly the while, with the best grade


SEDAN
BELGIUM
REMILLY
LINE HELD BY 77TH WHEN ARMISTICE WAS SIGNED
NOV 11TH
AUTRECOURT
CAPNIGNAN
HOUZON
RAUCOURT
MONTMEDY
LACHIERS RIV
STONNE NOV 5TH
STENAY
FRANCE
SOMMAUTHE. NOV. 3RD
AISNE RIVER
DUN SUR MEUSE
BUZANCY. NOV 2ND
VERPEL. NOV. 1ST
DAMVILLERS
GRAND PRE OCT 16TH
ST. JUVIN
MARCQ. OCT. 3RD
CORNAY
MONTFAUCON
LOST BATTALION
BINARVILLE
OCT 2ND TO 8TH
MALANCOURT
VARENNE
AISNE R.
AIRE RIVER
LA CHALADE
SEPT. 20TH
VERDUN
ARGONNE FOREST
ST. MENEHOULD

German wire and concrete—well, a couple of *eh, biens!!* It was no poilu funeral. They would seek out "Madelon," who would bring them "something to drink." For, despite her beauty, she was sane—was "Madelon."

So that the Boche might not be apprised of the relief did he catch a glimpse of a uniform other than the horizon blue, the French remained in the firing trench proper until the historic night of September 25-26. Before leading up their men, American officers reconnoitred the line in French uniforms.

THE MIGHTY TASK OF SEPTEMBER 26

Thus it was another relief-attack from which the 77th set out on its vast venture at 5:30 on the morning of September 26. And that sort of attack means that having marched miles from the rear after dark the men reach the "jumping off" trench just in time to be kept awake for the remainder of the night by the resounding banging of the artillery. For three hours the 152nd Artillery Brigade, aided by heavy French artillery and guns of the Army Corps, hammered sixteen paths through the dense wire till it seemed that the whole surface of the globe must be quaking with ague. But when the four regiments of infantry—all of which were in the front line on account of the extent of front—clambered "over the top" to follow the leaping barrage, so heavy a fog enshrouded the sea of shell craters that finding the prepared passageways was no easy matter. Contact between advancing elements in that white, clammy blanket was impossible.

Over ravine-traversed territory whose soil had been blackened by the hot lead of four years the New Yorkers groped, stumbled and clawed their way. The first trench system, testifying to the accurate register of the artillery, was passed without opposition, but the jungle was such that at noon, when the earliest machine guns opened up, one battalion commander for a time could account for only five platoons out of his four companies.

The first prisoners belonged to the Second Landwehr Division, but, in all, the 77th was to encounter four additional enemy divisions. The casualties of the opening day were comparatively small, and the line had been advanced about two miles.

On the second day real resistance was met, especially from the inevitable machine guns. After repeated attacks the 305th and 306th took Four De Zube, the Abri St. Louis and St. Hubert's and Barricade pavilions. The latter was an engineer dump containing more than $2,000,000 worth of material. And the Yank's line went forward about a mile and a half. Enemy artillery was searching for the attackers, but its range was wild.

On the third day—it was "over the top" every morning now—the 305th took Abri du Crochet, the 307th, Bagatelle Pavilion. These pavilions were even more inviting than their name implied, being collections of luxurious dugouts and *soldatenheim*, fitted with blue—tiled bath tubs (inconsiderately broken) and other unbelievable comforts.

The fighting was increasing in stubbornness as the advance progressed. Machine gun Indian warfare, such as has been described, marked the whole extent of the front. Bayonet and pistol clashes were common. Small parties of Boches with light maxims frequently flanked small units, and every abandoned trench, every innocent-looking clump of bushes might conceal nests that would wait for the invaders to pass and then drop them from the rear.

ALL HONOR TO BRAVE COL. SMITH

On September 28th, the leading battalion of the 308th, commanded by Major Whittlesey, was temporarily cut off by machine gun parties along its line of communications. The division suffered no greater individual loss than it did in that of Lt. Col. Fred E. Smith, second in command of the 308th, who gave his life in an effort to reestablish the chain of runners and get ammunition and rations forward. He attacked a machine gun party single-handed, first having compelled his detachment to take cover. Badly wounded in the side, the fearless Colonel continued to advance alone upon the enemy, pouring a fire from his automatic at the nest until he was hit again and fell dead. Col. Smith, beloved by every man who know him, is one of the 77th's Medal of Honor heroes.

On the following day relief was sent forward, and the 308th struck north again. Three companies of the First Battalion, under Major Whittlesey, and three companies of the Second Battalion, under Capt. (now Major) George McMurtry, had orders to take an objective along the Binarville-Viergette Road, a little east of Charlevaux Mill. On October 2nd they had won the ground. But troops of another division on their immediate left were several kilometres to their rear. Company K of the 307th, on their right, joined up with them. And when the Germans simply moved in behind them from their exposed left flank the seven companies of Yanks settled down to a siege of dauntless defense that will be known through all the days of world history as the stand of the "Lost Battalion."

Of course that tenacious term is a misnomer. When no amount of "bucking" could break the line confronting the 77th on October 1st orders went out that each assaulting unit would try breaking through individually—regardless of flank support. Once an advance element, like a spearhead, could be flung out into hostile territory, flanks could be swung up to connect with it. And it was really the exploit of the "Lost Battalion" that made possible the straightening out of the 77th's line and the subsequent complete capture of the Forest.

So much for the tactics of it. Everyone knows that for five days, against daily attacks from an enemy on all sides, the half-starved men of the 308th repulsed every desperate onslaught. Everyone knows that when nearly half the 700 besieged were casualties, an offer of "honorable surrender" was ignored. But it is not as well known, probably, that as many casualties were suffered in reaching the beleaguered as were sustained inside that rectangle of death.

One might think that at such a crisis the division reserve troops would be sent to the rescue. But no.

"This is a family affair," said Brigadier-General Johnson to the officers of the remainder of the 154th, "and, as such, we will handle it ourselves."

GENERAL JOHNSON LED ATTACKS IN PERSON

Although a hundred men of a single company went to earth in a few minutes striving to reach their stricken comrades, although in one day five attacks were made upon the Germans—two of them led in person by General Johnson; although assaults followed every day until relief broke through, no outside aid was asked. The 154th Brigade did its own rescuing when men of the 307th, from the right flanks, joined their fellows on the night of October 7th.

What was happening in the "Lost Battalion's" blood-stained ground during those interminable days is vividly narrated by Capt. William J. Cullen, one of the company commanders, who was awarded the D. S. C. for exposing himself to fire

in order to signal from an open spot to aviators who were trying to drop food within reach of the emaciated defenders.

"We had left along our march, of course, a line of communications," writes Capt. Cullen, describing the situation on the night of October 2, after their objective had been taken. "Patrols were sent out on our right and left, but found there were no Americans within three kilometers of us. We knew then that our flanks had failed to break through and settled down to wait for them.

"That night the Boches attacked. We heard them coming up, although we could not see them. The forest was dense and observation difficult. They started the attack with a heavy concentration of machine gun fire and then, under cover of more machine guns at our rear, they came in close and bombed us with 'potato mashers.' A couple of nervous fingers pulled their triggers from our ranks, but I steadied them until the Boche got sufficiently close to be annoying and then gave the order: 'Commence firing!' The crack of those rifles was certainly music to me. After about ten minutes the Boche retired.

"The next day they 'rolled up,' or chased in our runner posts, and then we knew that we were completely surrounded. To make sure that he got us and to prevent help from reaching us the enemy during the night wired the hill in our rear and manned the position with a strong garrison of machine gunners. We had no rations now. In fact, on account of the rapidity of our progress, the men had had only one ration for the four preceding days. There was very little of a pleasant nature to look forward to. But there we were. And, our orders being 'to hold to the last man,' there we would stay.

"Our troops came up from the rear the next day and battled their way to the wire. Those damned machine guns got in their deadly work and the attack failed. We knew, however, that they would keep at it until they reached us and so we sat back and waited.

"We hadn't waited long when the Boche attacked again. They started with a machine gun barrage on our rear, and supplemented it with a couple of trench mortar batteries, giving us a mighty merry time of it.

LACK OF FOOD BEGINS TO TELL

"We were beginning to notice our lack of rations now. We had been drinking water from shell holes, and though we could feel solid substances in it, we were thankful to have even that to drink. The men were restless and were popping constantly out of their meagre shelters on one mission or another. And the Boche was so close that a branch could not be moved without attracting a stream of machine gun bullets. I talked cheerfully with the men and distributed the few cigarettes that remained. They were stout-hearted fellows, all of them. When I told them to 'Stick to it, boys,' they answered, each post in turn, 'Don't worry about this post. We'll stick, all right.'

"One of them, Sidney Smith, was shot through the stomach. I told him he could go over to a safer place, near battalion headquarters. He said, 'Why I ain't hurt enough so I can't still shoot this gun.' Another little chap, Miller, crawled out into the open after a sniper on his own initiative. His rifle cracked and he turned his head and said: 'I got him.' But he couldn't get back himself. A Boche sniper got him.

"The strain was beginning to tell on the men and their eyes took on an abnormal, peculiar bulge. We smoked dry leaves and ate twigs."

After detailing with a humorous touch how he interviewed a German prisoner affecting total indifference the while to a two-hour German artillery strafe that "nearly ruined the whole deatchment" and caused the prisoner to squirm in mighty fear, Capt. Cullen, describes at length one of the five attacks, this time at night, to which the outfit was subjected.

"We could hear the Boche around us shrieking and trying to intimidate us with their *schrecklichkeit*.

" 'We have the Americans just where we want them,' they yelled. They closed in on us. From the direction of his voice the leader was just behind my post of command. He would call out: 'Eitel.' And a voice over to the left would answer 'Hier.' Then: 'Adolph.' Another voice now on the front would answer: 'Hier.' Then: '*Sind deiner men da?*' and the answer: '*Ja, Ja!*' Then the son of a gun would shout: '*Alle zusammen!*' (All together), and thereupon it seemed that the law of gravity had been reversed and everything went up in the air. They simply piled high explosive grenades in on us. Their trench mortars rained their infernal shells. We couldn't see them, of course, due to the heavy brush, and waited for them to rush us. During a lull their leader called out: 'Kamerad, vill you?'

"He seemed to think that we were ready to surrender. That was about the last straw for me. 'Come in and get us, you blankety-blank-blank!' I yelled at him, using the few cuss words that I knew of his language.

"Then we opened fire on where we judged they were and gave them hell. That settled that little attack. There was blood all round us the next day, and we knew we got some of them.

"Airplanes circled above us trying to locate our position. It was a hard job for them, concealed as we were under the trees. One day an aviator came down very low. I jumped out into an open space, and, lying on my back, waved a dirty white towel to him. He signalled: 'Understood.' I was rewarded with a shower of machine gun bullets which chirped all around me. The next day the aviators tried to drop food to us, but we could not reach it. Think of Jerry getting it—chocolate, cigarettes and bully beef!

"On the morning of October 8th, about 1 A. M., I was dozing in my bunk hole when I heard a voice calling, 'Lieutenant, Lieutenant!' I thought it was time to repulse another Boche attack. But it was my battalion runner with a little gunny sack containing bread and two cans of bully beef. He brought a message from the Major that our right flank had come up and that a patrol had reached us with a few rations. I opened up the bully beef, took a fork from my mess kit and went around my posts on a tour of inspection. I told the men what had happened and, to prove the truth of what I said—it seemed so incredible—I gave each man a forkful of 'bully.' We were ready to go on for another six days then."

So it was that relief came to the "Lost Battalion"—its whole significance, like the significance of the great moments of life, being epitomized in a very little thing, "a forkful of bully."

PERSONAL CONGRATULATIONS FROM GENERAL PERSHING

Lacking sleep, with only a minimum of rations, cold from the continuous rains, reduced still more in number by their unstinted self-sacrifice in rescuing their surrounded "buddies," the men of the 77th spurred themselves to the completion of their task—the clearing of the forest.

Past the fateful Binarville-Viergette road they pressed into country that was beginning to open up. The same deadly machine gun nests were encountered, the same foot-by-foot fighting was necessary until the enemy fell back from their main line of resistance, crushed in spirit at the square-chinned persistence of these New Yorkers.

By October 10th, after a gain of several kilometers, the forest was solely American. It was a great day for the 77th when General Pershing himself came all the way from Chaumont to visit them. Not that he could see them formally assembled, of course, for the fight was still on. But he had come up to General Alexander's Boche dugout over the identical entangled ground for which the "Liberty Boys" had paid so dearly. The "C-in-C" himself knew now what it had been like. And word trickled up along the line that the Commander in Chief had said the whole American Army was admiring the 77th for its conquest.

What were Jerry's chances after that? What if he had thrown in three fresh divisions against them? With the strange sun warm upon them again the division sprang forward more than six miles during October 9th and 10th, occupying the little villages of La Besoqne, Chevieres and Marq.

On October 12th there was more praise for the 77th in the following commendation:

"ADVANCED HEADQUARTERS FIRST ARMY CORPS.

Oct. 12, 1918.

From: Commanding General, 1st Army Corps, U. S.
To: Commanding General, 77th Division, U. S.
Subject: Commendation.

1. The Corps Commander directs me to inform you that he feels once more during the present operations called upon to express his gratification and appreciation of the work of the 77th Division.

2. This division has been in the line constantly since the night of the 25th of September under circumstances at least as difficult as those which have confronted any other division of the 1st Army.

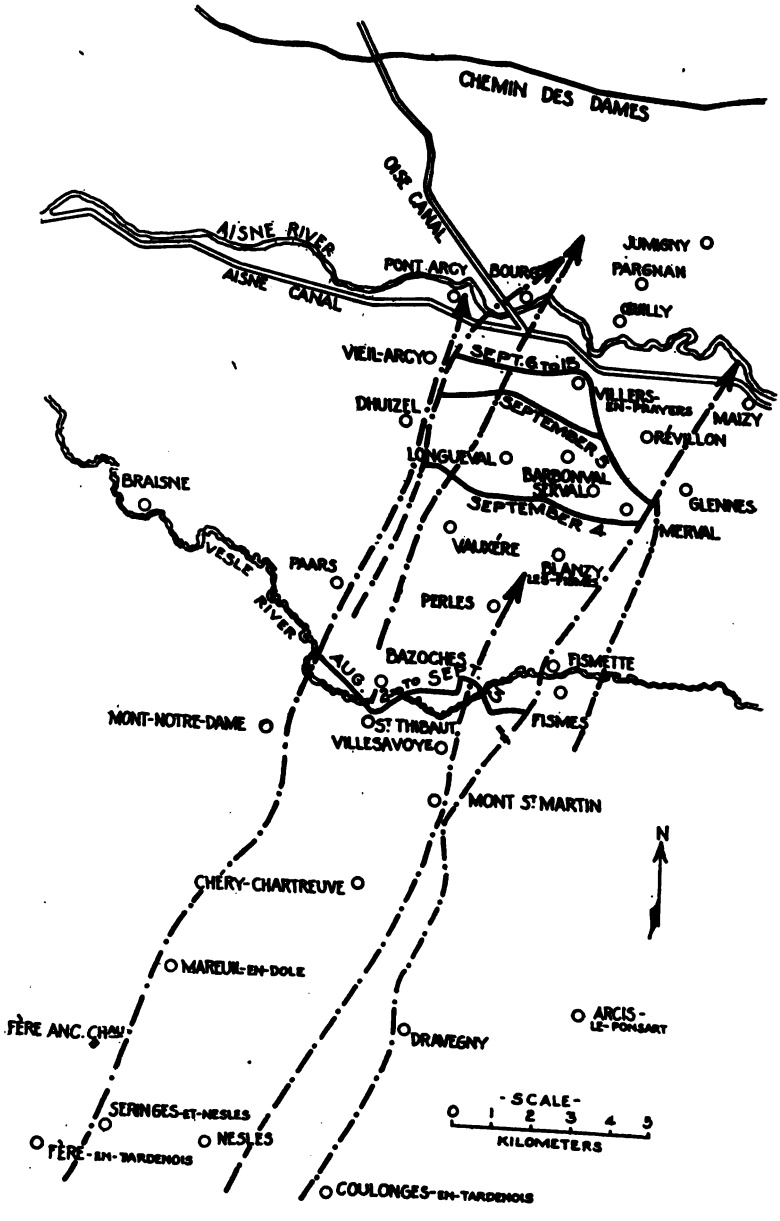
3. In spite of these conditions your command has pushed steadily forward on a line with the foremost, and today, after eighteen days of constant fighting, is still ready to respond to any demand made upon it.

4. The Corps Commander is proud indeed of such a unit as yours and congratulates you on such a command.

MALIN CRAIG,
Chief of Staff."

It must have been on words of encouragement that the doughboys kept going these days. Even in their sore straits there was still another exacting task for them in the attacks on St. Juvin and Grand Pre. But the thing was done somehow.

The Aire river offered a serious obstacle to both objectives. Swimming, wading and on rafts, troops of the 153rd Brigade left the Aire at their back on October 14th and under heavy artillery fire from heights to the north forced their way into St. Juvin inside of an hour. The Second and Third Battalions, 305th, supported the attack of the Second Battalion of the 306th. But it was really a single company—and, at that, a company with less than 30 men left when they invaded the town—which captured the strong point.



77TH DIVISION
IN THE
OISE-AISNE OFFENSIVE

The story is told that a Jew and an Irishman were the first into St. Juvin as scouts. Cautiously, they were proceeding along a village street when from a window a Boche bullet sang past the Irishman's ear. He dropped. The Jew, thinking his partner had been killed, rushed in terrible fury toward the house, grenades ready, shouting: "Out—come out, quick."

The Irishman, to the amazement of his angry comrade, joined him, and between them filed more than a score of weaponless Germans, headed by a battalion commander.

In a short time the eighteen doughboys who were following the two scouts had rounded up 360 prisoners. The odds had been 18 to 1 against the New Yorkers. Who will venture to express the feeling of the Boche when they learned that fact?

While the enemy was futilely counter-attacking in St. Juvin on the following day the 154th Brigade took Grand Pre, the 307th flooding in upon it from three sides. The town was mopped up after the German flight and on the same night the 78th relieved the exhausted New Yorkers.

Now, when they gather around the post-office stove in the years to come and recapture Grand Pre nightly, no 78th Division man will ever concede that the 77th took even a lamp post in the village. Nor will any 77th man, as he bites viciously into another dried apricot, ever admit that the 78th was capable of taking anything but—extreme care.

The dispute, at this early date, was best settled by a disinterested party in the person of "The Stars and Stripes" historian. This authority states, in effect, that Grand Pre was twice taken on different occasions, first by the 77th, and later by the 78th. Which should make it unnecessary for the postmaster to put in a bill for damages.

THE CAPTORS OF GRAND PRE

"The enemy resisted violently and the advance was slow," writes the mediator, of the attack on Grand Pre, "but patrols of the 307th finally got across the river (the Aire) by enfiltration, reached the town by 5:30 in the evening, and had it in possession an hour later. Foot bridges across the river were built after the patrols got over, the whole battalion crossed, and the next day the town proper was organized for defense along its west and north edges, exclusive of the steep hill at the north end on which stand a chateau and park.

"Under these conditions, with the extreme left in not very complete contact with the right of the French forces down the Aire below Grand Pre, the 77th Division was relieved by the 78th.

"Moving up from the 1st Corps reserve near Montblainville and Varennes to relieve the 77th Division, the 78th became somewhat confused on unfamiliar roads and did not reach its positions as soon as was expected. The consequence was that the 312th Infantry, relieving elements of the 77th Division in Grand Pre, did not get possession of the whole town, into part of which the Germans returned and were only ejected again after several days of severe fighting."

If the officers' mess waxed tactical over the capture of Grand Pre, not so the doughboys' crap circles during the two weeks' breathing spell accorded the 77th in ex-German dugouts, just in back of the line, where they rested, drew equipment and received "replacements" between October 16 and 31.

For the first time in the division's career in France, some leaves had been granted

for Paris and Nice. Then they were recalled. "77th Front and Center!" was the command. The American line was to go forward toward historic Sedan on November 1, and the old reliable 77th was to "lead all the rest" in the matter of gaining ground during its second long "hitch" in the big offensive.

CRASHING THROUGH THE KRIEMHILDE STELLUNG

Once more the risky relief-attack was made, the Liberty Division taking over from the 78th almost the identical line it had left. The artillery preparation was superbly thunderous—two hours of winged hell for the Boche.

The 153rd Brigade led off against the renowned Kriemhilde Stellung, up a steep l towards Champigneulle. The resistance on the first day was intensely powerful l little headway was made. November 2, however, saw Champigneulle and four aller villages in Yankee hands—Verpel, Thenorgues, Harricourt and Bar. The pressible doughboy made his jokes about the last of his acquisitions. It was some solation, he opined, to descend upon a French Bar, even if someone had taken n him a similar privilege in his native land during his absence.

he Boches were falling back headlong now, and the Yank was nearing the climax is Hun-hurrying. It was even contemplated sending the infantry forward in or trucks, but the roads did not permit.

hrough Autruche, Fontenoy and St. Pierremont the 306th sped on November 3, uring two German batteries—light guns—that could not pull out in time, so was the onrush of the doughboy. That blithe soul was now living largely on nan cabbage because the rations could not keep up with him.

1 the fourth day of the advance the 154th Brigade "telescoped" the leading de on the run—an exceedingly difficult form of relief that effects unchecked ess. The town of Oches was taken that day, marking a total advance of about n miles since the start.

ere was intermittent machine gun resistance and considerable harassing artil- re at all stages of the advance. In justice to the individual German machine r it must be said that, generally, he knew how to die. Left behind by his ting organization on an assignment almost the equivalent of handing him his death warrant, he stayed grimly at his maxim and sold his life as dearly as he could. And this, to give his comrades more time to flee.

BUSY OCCUPYING SEVENTEEN TOWNS

Nine miles were added to the division's gain on November 6 after the occupation of Stonne and La Besace. French civilians in these villages had been under German rule for nearly four years. They had been lined up every morning by the *unteroffizier* and marched off to various occupations like serfs. With the advent of the Americans they cried and laughed hysterically, even embracing some of their liberators, much to the latter's extreme confusion.

By the night of November 6, the 77th was practically at the Meuse, having gone through Flaba, Autrecourt and Haraucourt after stern opposition from artillery and machine guns.

The next day—November 7—the advance continued through Raucourt, Meuse-la-Angecourt and Remilly. The 77th was now holding the Meuse heights, with Sedan about five miles away and visible in the distance.

With the clearing of the Argonne Forest, and the whirlwind finish to the Meuse, the New Yorkers had driven north for nearly 38 miles—the record gain for any

American division—and seventeen French villages had been restored to pathetically grateful peasants.

The boys were on tip-toe for the crossing of the river, and patrols of the 305th and 307th did force passages at Villers and Remilly, respectively, under withering fire. The anticipation was that the "watermelon," of which the 77th sang so many centuries earlier at Camp Upton, was really to be eaten "on the Rhine." But when the tidbit was almost at their lips the armistice banished it as forbidden fruit.

This is not to say that there was disappointment at the termination of hostilities. The "Cease Firing" order, however, had no such hilarious aftermath in the front line as it did among the folks at home. On the contrary the armistice found the men of the 77th quiet and deliberative. They were glad that the bloodshed was ended—yes, a thousand times, but contemplative as to the future out of their recent experiences—eager for stabilized peace; eager that their country might see through their own lessoned eyes the error of unpreparedness, and yet fearful of over-preparedness and its blight of militarism.

Better, more thoughtful, more loyal citizens they are for their warring—the men of the 77th. And whereas New York City sent forth a heterogeneous mass, she has welcomed back a unified class, annealed like tested steel in the fires that burn out impurities—the fires that leave the American wholly American.

NOTE—This booklet, while accurate and complete in its treatment of the 77th Division's career, does not pretend, of course, to set forth the divisional history as elaborately as, nor in the detail of an official history published by the 77th Division Association in a volume of 250 pages, with many maps, illustrations and photographs. The official history is sold for such laudable purposes as providing for dependent families of men killed in France, aiding the disabled to start anew in life and offering a home to such of New York's ex-soldiers as may need it.

ARTILLERY OF THE 77TH IN VERSE

(To the tune of "Home, Boys, Home!")

Oh, first we went to Baccaat to learn to fight the Huns,
And all we did was eat and sleep; we never worked the guns;
The Germans never fought by night, they never fought by day—
A quiet place to learn to fight was up in Reherrey!

CHORUS

Home, boys, home, its home we ought to be
Home, boys, home, in the land of libertee
For the ash and the oak and the sour apple tree
They all grow together up in North Amerikee!

Oh, then we went to Farm des Dames across from old Bazoches,
And took up a position for to harass Henry Boche.
But Henry shelled us night and day and gassed us in between—
As hot a spot was Farm des Dames as any I have seen.

Then we went across the Vesle and up to Vauxcere,
The doughboys tried to catch the Hun, but he was on his way.
Yet when we settled in the town he ranged us to a dot,
And every time he wanted to he dropped one on the spot.

Then the Wops relieved us and we went out south by west
And hiked from Fismes to Menehould with never any rest;
We took up a position on a hill above Chalade
With all the big and little guns the U. S. Army had.

Then we fought the Argonne, from Harazee to Grandpre,
And took in Abri Crochet and La Viergette on the way—
We showed the Hun some fighting and some brand new Yankee tricks,
Then we handed Heinie's number to an outfit from Camp Dix.

Next we all were granted leave and hit the trail for Nice,
But first we spent a week in Paris dodging the police;
Then Pershing planned another drive and called us to the line
Because he knew without us he could never cross the Rhine.

We started with a mighty push, and soon were in a race—
The nags the *Frogs had given us could never stand the pace,
So we parked the First Battalion in the city of Verpel
And sent the dizzy Second on to give the Dutchmen hell!

The Second started hell-for-leather riding over France.
They tried to catch the infantry but never got a chance;
McDougal got a section up and got it damn well hit—
And then the Boche decided it was time for them to quit.

Oh, now the war is over and we'll soon be safe at home,
All sitting in Bustanoby's and blowing off the foam,
The Germans fought a dirty war and raised a lot of hell,
But when they got the Yankee's goat, then they were **S. O. L.

* French.
** Surely "out of luck."

The VICTORIOUS 77TH
HEROES OF THE ARGONNE FOREST

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